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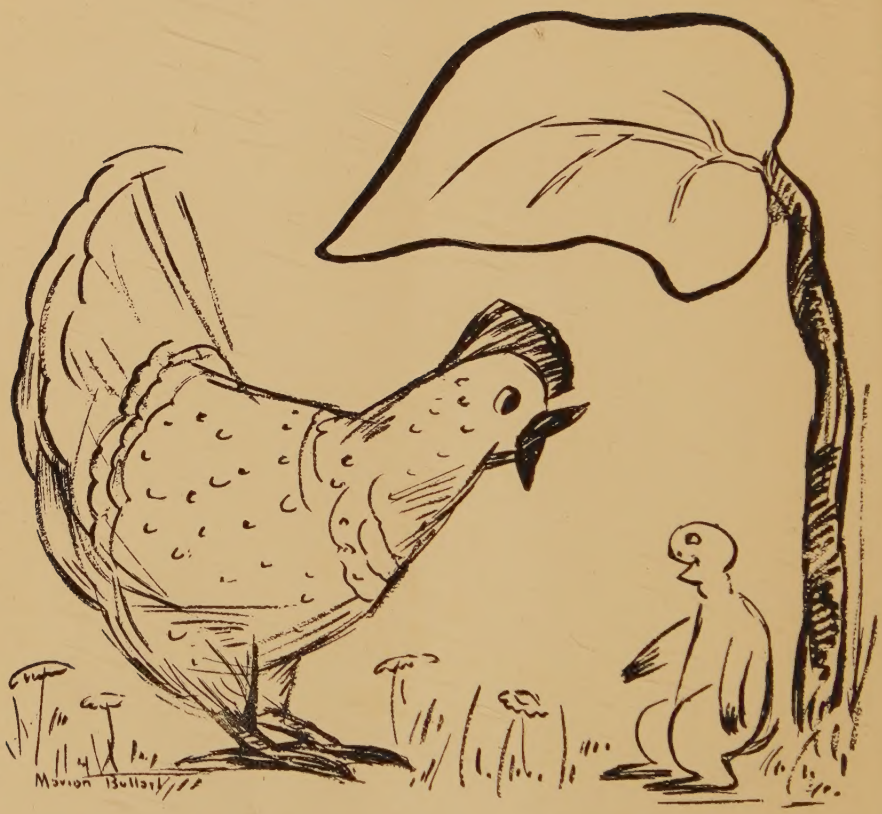

"SEE WHO'S HERE, SPECKLED HEN," CALLED SAMMIE.

Frontispiece.

TRAVELS OF SAMMIE THE TURTLE

BY

MARION BULLARD

AUTHOR OF "THE SOMERSAULTING RABBIT," ETC.

NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

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TO

DEAR YOUNG ESTHER MORSE

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Travels of Sammie the Turtle

TRAVELS OF SAMMIE THE TURTLE

CHAPTER I

SAMMIE the Turtle rolled off a slippery stone and fell over on his back with a bump. But he did not kick and wriggle with his tail and his heels and his head and try to shove himself rightside up the way any other Turtle would. Not at all. He just lay there with his under shell up toward the sun and remarked, philosophically, "Now I am *on* my back, I might as well get my stomach warm."

You see Sammie was not a Usual Turtle. There was nothing in the world he liked to do half so much as lie on his back and *wonder why* about almost everything or else write a poem. What he used to wonder about most was this—why Turtles had shells on both sides, almost like a pie with two crusts.

"It is all very well for a pie that never has to go anywhere," Sammie used to say to himself, "but for a Turtle, it is all nonsense to be carrying a couple of heavy shells with him wherever he goes. I wonder

how a pie would look wandering about—very foolish. I wonder why"—and then he thought of a poem, as he often did.

If I were a pie
I'd eat my shell.
I think perhaps
I'd look as well
As I do now—
Not much worse
Anyhow.

"Sammie-eeeeeee!" called his mother from the other side of the brook, "what are you doing?"

"O! bother," said Sammie to himself, but he called back to his mother, "nothing, mother"—and then he groaned.

"O, bother!" said Sammie again, though his mother had told him not to use such words, "I suppose I've got to turn over and get to work at that old real estate business."

You see Sammie's mother was practical. She didn't care to have her son always writing poetry. She wanted him to go into the real estate business like his father and his grandfather and his great grandfather before him. All Sammie's ancestors had been Usual Turtles.

"What's the use," Sammie asked his mother, "of trying to sell houses to Turtles? A Turtle is born with a roof over his head and a floor under his stomach."

"NOW I AM ON MY BACK, I MIGHT AS WELL GET MY STOMACH WARM," SAID SAMMIE.

"Sammie," replied his mother, "use the wits the Lord gave you. A house has to be *on* something, doesn't it?"

"Yes, mother, but——"

"Don't argue with me, Samuel," said his exasper-

ated mother. "Stop asking foolish questions and wondering why all the time, and go up to the Tract of Land."

You see his father had left his mother a Tract of Land so that she could carry on the real estate business. She was planning to cut it up into lots and make a profit.

So Sammie went along and he hummed a little song to himself—

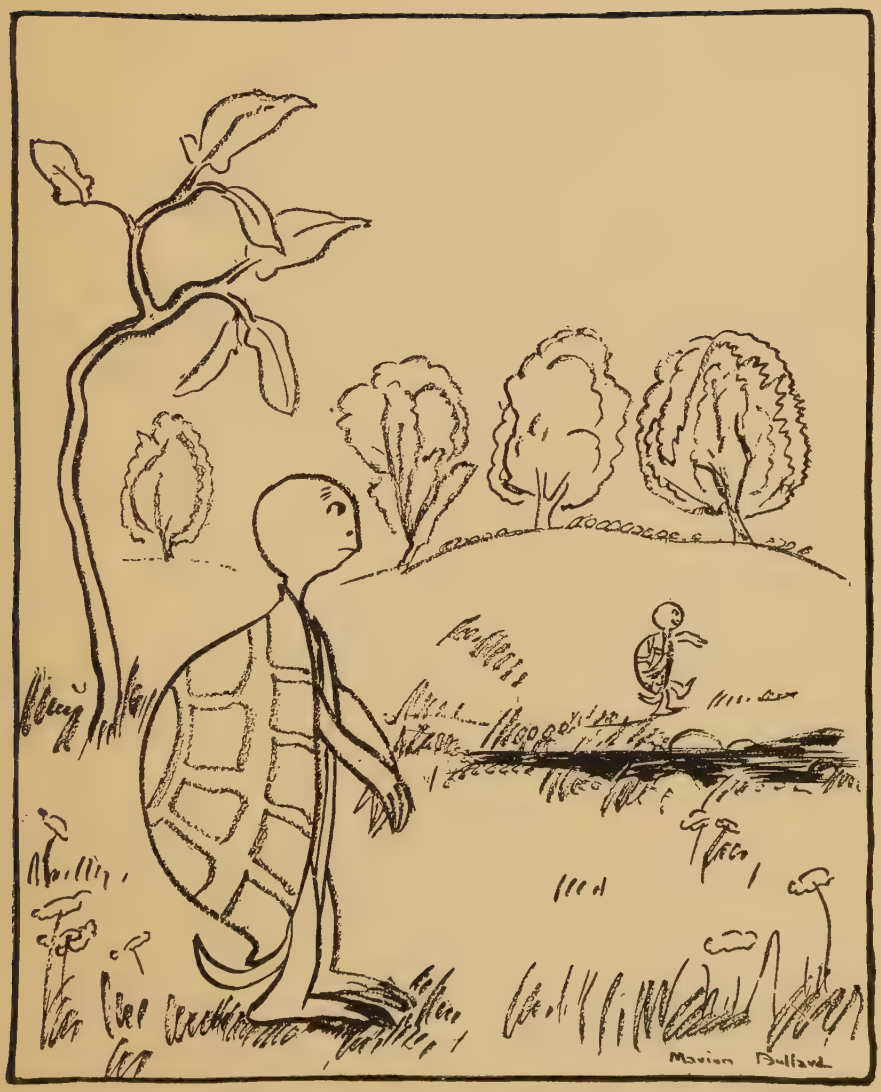
> Oh, for peace to write a song!
> Oh, to lie upon my back
> And sing the whole day long!

His mother watched him walking along the bank and she sighed and wished he would be more like other Turtles and stop wondering why and take more interest in the real estate business.

Meanwhile, Sammie kept moving right along thinking up more poems. One went this way—

> I long to scratch my shut-in stomach
> On a soft and grassy hummock.

Sammie never in his life had scratched his stomach, for it was always inside his shell. "All nonsense being inside anything so stiff that it bumps over things," he used to think. He thought about other



SAMMIE'S MOTHER WISHED HE WOULD BE MORE LIKE OTHER TURTLES.

Animals with shells. "Even the Snail gets outside his shell when he wants to. *He* knows how the lovely soft grass feels. There is no sense in it—no sense at all in being built like a pie that is always on a table and never goes anywhere. It is ridiculous for an Animal to be built like this."

Up alongside the brook he went until he finally reached the Tract of Land, which was right beside the Pool. "We shall call it Turtletown on the Pool," his mother had decided, "and then we shall certainly make a profit. Every Turtle wants a place to lay her eggs no matter if she does travel."

Sammie leaned over and looked down into the cool clear water.

"Oh, dear," he said, "I wish I could get my stomach wet just once, Alas!

I wonder why, I wonder why.
A Turtle is built like an apple pie."

"Hrrimph," came a voice from right over his head.

"Is that you?" asked Sammie, looking up into the wild cherry tree.

"Of course it is me. Did you think it was a Pterodactyl?" asked the voice. "If you don't like your shell, get along out of it."

Sammie was surprised.

"Did I hear you say, 'get along out of it?' " he exclaimed.

"You did. *I* do. I am always coming out of whatever I am in. What's more, I get wings when I come out," the Tent Caterpillar told him (for that was who it was).

"IS THAT YOU?" ASKED SAMMIE.

"My goodness, Tent Caterpillar!" exclaimed Sammie, "do you suppose I would get wings if I came out of my shell?"

"Now see here, Sammie, to the best of my knowledge, no Animals with shells turn into Butterflies. Take the Oyster. Take the Clam. Consider the Snail. No sir. I guess in this life one has to choose between shells and wings."

Sammie was listening with great attention. He put

his head first to one side and then the other. It was plain that he was making a great decision. Suddenly

"WHO DID YOU THINK I WAS—A PTERODACTYL?" ASKED THE TENT CATERPILLAR.

he announced in a firm voice, "Tent Caterpillar, this just goes to show what a lot of Turtle ancestors will do to make a fellow a Turtle and keep his shells on him.

Bless you, my friend,
World without end!
If you will believe it,
I'm going to heave it
OFF MY BACK!"

And Sammie did exactly that. He walked right out of his shell a free Turtle, and he felt so extraordinarily light and happy that he burst into song—

"Oh, happy day! I will away,
Free to wonder how and why
A Turtle is built like an apple pie.
Free to stride the world along,
Free to sing a merry song.
No more real estate to buy,
No more real estate to sell.
I can rhyme and wonder why
Underneath the azure sky.
I wonder why—I wonder—WHY-Y-YY!"

And that was the longest and most complete poem Sammie had ever made.

He stretched out his arms and his tail and legs and wriggled his neck, feeling happier than he had ever been in his life.

"Whew!" exclaimed Sammie, gleefully, and he turned and looked down at his empty shell.

"Goodbye, shell!" he said, "I am now a free Turtle. I shall be a poet and a philosopher." He pushed his shell under a projecting rock and then, singing softly under his breath, he started out into the world to see everything there was to be seen.

. . . . .

When Sammie did not come home to supper, his mother went up the brook to see what had happened to him. Not a sign of Sammie anywhere until she spied his empty shell tucked under the rock near the Pool.

"I might have known he would do this some day," she wept, and wiped her eyes. "Sammie was always an odd one. He was not a Usual Turtle."

Meanwhile Sammie was on his way, singing softly and cheerily as he strode toward the village—

Oh, I am free to sing my song
Along the road the whole day long,
Free to sing and wonder why
Underneath the azure sky.

CHAPTER II

SAMMIE went striding along toward the village and every once in a while he would skip and jump just to see how high he *could* jump without his shell to weigh him down. Also he found that the grass tickled his stomach somewhat, and jumping helped that. He looked a little pale on account of having been shut in so long "but I'll soon be sunburned," said Sammie to himself, "and then I'll look much like everybody else, I guess."

After a while he felt the pangs of hunger.

"Hungry!" he exclaimed. He crawled underneath some bars beside the road and found himself in a huckleberry patch, which was great luck, for he was especially fond of huckleberries and knew that a fly or two and a few berries would make him an excellent lunch.

While he was sitting under a huckleberry bush waiting for a fly to come along, the Lop Eared Rabbit hopped out from his near-by hole, and jumped about a foot when he saw Sammie sitting there so still.

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, SAMMIE WOULD JUMP HIGH IN THE AIR.

"Sammie Turtle!" he exclaimed, "where is your shell?"

"Shush," said Sammie, "I am waiting for a fly."

"Shush, shush, I will *not* shush!" ejaculated the Lop Eared Rabbit, "not until you explain yourself.

"SAMMIE TURTLE! WHERE IS YOUR SHELL?" EXCLAIMED THE LOP-EARED RABBIT.

I never saw a shelled Turtle before. *What* has happened?"

Sammie saw it was no use to try for any flies with the Lop Eared Rabbit making such a racket, so he said, "I walked right out of my shell and came along to see the world the way a poet and a philosopher

has *got* to do. That's all. No need to make such a fuss."

"I'll be golsquizzled!" exclaimed the Lop Eared Rabbit.

Sammie was so delighted with this new word that he began to say it over and over, "golsquizzle, golsquizzle, golsquizzle! What a lovely word!" Then the Lop Eared Rabbit interrupted him.

"Did you know you look awfully queer?"

"Of course," replied Sammie, "but I won't after I get tanned up a bit. Anyway, I do not look half so queer as I did between those two shells when I resembled a pie. They annoyed me very much. I don't suppose there is anything much queerer looking than a Turtle anyway—unless it is a Rabbit with his ears sticking up. Listen, here's a poem about you—

An Animal with the jumping habit
Is the brown and Lop Eared Rabbit.
His tail is short,
His ears are long,
Which may be right but looks all wrong."

"My word, Sammie! You *are* a poet! I am astonished. Wait a minute until I call some of the other huckleberry patch Animals so you can make poems about them, too."

He went off and, in a minute, came back with the Woodchuck. When the Woodchuck saw Sammie, he exclaimed, "Sammie! You *do* look queer without your shell!"

"I know it," said Sammie, "but I won't after I

SAMMIE RECITES A POEM ABOUT THE WOODCHUCK.

get tanned. Listen to this about you. I didn't make it myself, but it is a good one—

How much wood would a Woodchuck chuck
If a Woodchuck could chuck wood?"

When they heard this, the Woodchuck and the Lop Eared Rabbit roared with laughter, in fact they

rolled on the ground with amusement and the Woodchuck made Sammie repeat it several times. Finally they stopped laughing and sat up.

"Oh, dear!" said the Woodchuck wiping tears of laughter out of his eyes, "that's the funniest thing I ever heard in my life. Whoever would have thought of it but a Turtle? I must go and tell some of the other huckleberry patch Animals to come and hear you. Wait until I come back." And off he went, chuckling to himself.

In a few minutes, back he came with the Red Squirrel.

"Make a poem about him, Sammie," begged the Woodchuck.

Now Sammie didn't care much for the Red Squirrel. He knew too much about him and his ways. He contemplated him solemnly for a few minutes while everybody waited and then he recited this—

"The Red Squirrel is a fearful sinner.
He steals Bird's eggs for his dinner."

There was a most uncomfortable silence. Nobody looked at anybody else nor said a word. What was there to say? They knew it was true, but the Woodchuck and the Lop Eared Rabbit had never dreamed that little Sammie Turtle would come right out with it like that.

The Red Squirrel was so mad he was speechless and he simply sat and *glared* furiously at Sammie, who said (beginning to feel very, very uncomfortable), "well, don't you?"

"I do," replied the Red Squirrel violently. "What's more I eat *Turtle eggs*. You get along out of this

SAMMIE SCAMPERED.

huckleberry patch. Scamper!" and he chased Sammie right out to the bars and under them to the road side. Then he went back chattering indignantly.

Sammie sat down on the grass outside the bars.

"Pretty cross, that Red Squirrel was," he ruminated, "but what's a Turtle going to do? That is, if he happens to be a poet? He's *got* to tell the truth—the eternal verities." He looked down at where he had scratched his stomach on a briar when he was

scampering out of the huckleberry patch in such a hurry.

"Scratched my tender stomach," he remarked, rubbing it, "maybe I'd have been wiser if I had kept my under shell, seeing that the world seems to be full of briars. Live and learn and get toughened," said Sammie cheerfully.

He stretched himself out on the grass and lay looking at the sky thoughtfully for a while. Then he said aloud—"a poet *must* tell the truth even if he does get chased out of the huckleberry patch for it. I wonder why——" and then Sammie fell asleep right beside the road.

CHAPTER III

WHEN Sammie woke up he was chilly.

"I must have left my feet sticking out," he said to himself sleepily, and drew them in—but there was nothing to draw them into!

"I'll be golsquizzled!" exclaimed Sammie, using that nice new word he had learned from the Lop Eared Rabbit, "I forgot that my shell is up beside the brook. It would have been handy to crawl into at night."

Up above in the sky, the stars were shining brightly, but Sammie could see no moon wherever he looked, so he made a poem about it—

"Sparkling stars
Where is the moon?
I wonder why
It is not shining
In the sky."

Exactly at that moment, up came the moon from behind the hill, big and round and yellow. Sammie

"SPARKLING STARS, WHERE IS THE MOON?" SANG SAMMIE.

felt very bare out there in the light so he went over to the shadow of a huge dock leaf and then he felt better. "A Turtle gets sort of used to his shell," he

ruminated, "being born *out* of one kind and *into* another. I must say a nightie would feel good."

You see Sammie had always been thinking of the disadvantages of a shell when he was in it, but now he was out of it he began to see the advantages, in fact he was becoming very philosophical and seeing both the insides and the outsides of everything, including shells.

"If I had had my shell," he thought, "I could have scrooched up inside it when the Red Squirrel chased me, and waited until the trouble was over. As it was, when he told me to scamper . . . I *had* to. Also it is a good joke on me, *wanting* to scratch my stomach on a grassy hummock and now I've scratched it—it hurts." Then Sammie grinned, for he was a very cheerful little Turtle.

"*Feeling* the world! That's what I am doing. Well, one must take the rough with the smooth. That's philosophy." And with that he fell asleep again under the dock leaf.

He was awakened in the early morning by a "cluck, cluck, cluck," and saw the Speckled Hen pecking away right near him.

"Hello, Speckled Hen!" called Sammie, "see who's here!"

"Why, Sammie Turtle!" exclaimed the Speckled

Hen, "what are doing so far from home with no shell on? You look completely plucked."

Sammie laughed at this for he knew as well as the next one that you *pluck feathers* and *shell shells*.

"Aren't you cold, Sammie?" she asked anxiously.

"A bit chilly," admitted Sammie, "but that is only to be expected at first. I walked out of my shell and am on my way to see the world."

"Seems to me the world is seeing *you*," remarked the Speckled Hen. "When my Aunt got her feathers pulled out by Marion's Dog Lucknow, she wore a knitted jacket to keep her warm."

"Take me to your Aunt, Speckled Hen," said Sammie at once. "I certainly would like to own a knitted jacket. I'll take a look at hers. It might be a very sensible thing for me to have."

So Sammie and the Speckled Hen went down to the barnyard. Cyrus was just putting out the grain for the Hens' breakfast and they invited Sammie to join them, which he did, being really very hungry because the Red Squirrel had chased him out of the huckleberry patch before he had time to eat his supper. He told the Hens about it and, when they heard of his poem about the Red Squirrel, they all clucked approvingly. "He's a thorough bad lot, that Red Squirrel," they said. "You did right, Sammie."

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"A TURTLE GETS SORT OF USED TO HIS SHELL," SAID SAMMIE.

Then they asked him to make a poem for them. Sammie sat a minute and then he recited this—

"Hens have feathers
For rainy weathers."

All the Hens cackled with delight and agreed that Sammie was an excellent poet. Then the Speckled Hen's Aúnt told about losing her feathers.

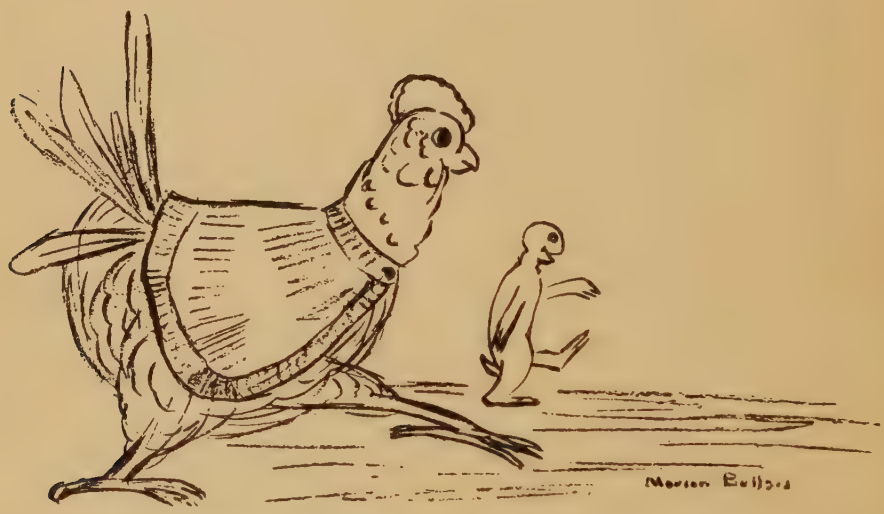
"I was that chilly, I sneezed," she related. "When they heard me sneeze, they were alarmed and they got me this knitted jacket. It saved my life without a doubt. Besides, Sammie, Hens of my age are too long accustomed to feathers to enjoy going about in their skins. It isn't seemly. Don't you feel a little queer yourself, even though you are young?"

"A little," admitted Sammie, "but very free and light. However, a knitted jacket wouldn't weigh much and it might be a very sensible thing for me to have for nights. Where can I get one like yours?"

"Didn't you know you can get *anything* down at Elwyn's Store in the village?" asked the surprised Hens. "They take our eggs and give all sorts of things in exchange."

"There!" ejaculated Sammie, "I knew I ought to see the world. Think of my never having heard of Elwyn's Store! Let us go down there at once."

So the Speckled Hen's Aunt and Sammie started off to the village. When they got to Elwyn's Store, the Speckled Hen's Aunt went up to the counter and she said, "have you any knitted jackets for Turtles?"



THE SPECKLED HEN'S AUNT AND SAMMIE GO TO THE VILLAGE.

"Sure we have," said Mr. Elwyn. "We have the finest line of turtle neck sweaters in town." And he showed them all sizes and colours.

"This is a wonderful store," said Sammie. "I'll take this sweater, Mr. Elwyn, and also a box of those huckleberries."

When his purchases had been completed, he and

the Speckled Hen's Aunt came out to the street. "Now," said Sammie, "I am perfectly equipped for my travels, with these huckleberries and my new turtle neck sweater, which is nothing short of a godsend."

"See that you put it on the minute you feel chilly, Sammie, especially at night," said the Speckled Hen's Aunt with motherly concern, "and now good-bye and good luck."

With that they parted, the Hen going back up the road to the barnyard and Sammie gaily starting off on the road to West Hurley, carrying his huckleberries and his new sweater and singing in his clear little voice—

"No other sweater
Could be better.
A huckleberry
Is a very
Sweet thing to munch
For a Turtle lunch.
O happy day
I'm on my way!"

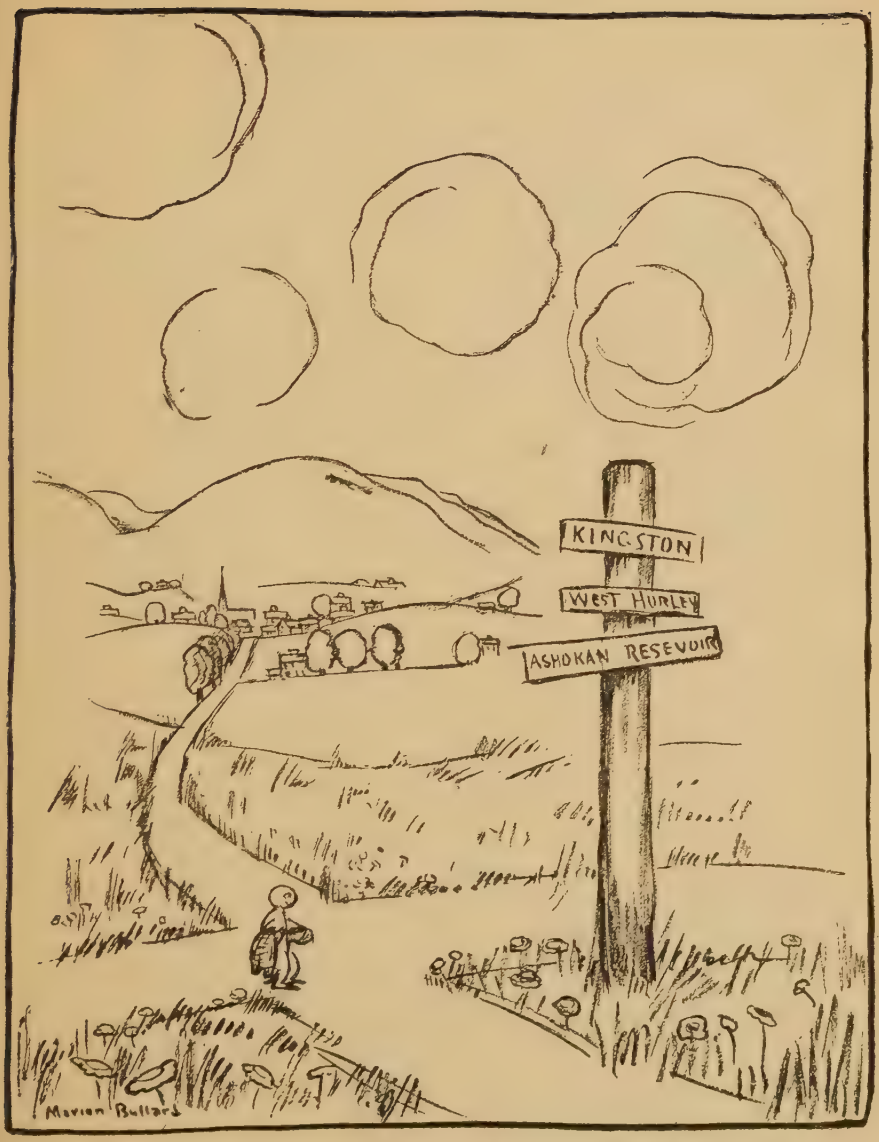
CHAPTER IV

SAMMIE went along, filled with the joy of life, singing little songs made up out of his head, until he came to the cross roads. Then he sat down and said to himself "Who knows what may be down that road to Saugerties, but then—who knows what may be down that road to West Hurley—who knows what may be down almost any road? Hard telling. I wonder which——?"

Suddenly he saw another sign saying "Ashokan Reservoir." That decided him, for he thought it might be wise to see the Ashokan Reservoir before he crossed the Atlantic Ocean, which he hoped to do soon. But first, he decided to step down to Peter's house, since he was so near, and see what he was doing out beside the mill.

He found Peter building a castle and sat down to watch him for a few minutes.

"This is a tower, Sammie," Peter told him. "I am going to imprison the Princess in it when I get it high enough. You can be the Troubadour and sing a song under the tower and rescue the Princess."



"WHAT MAY BE DOWN ALMOST ANY ROAD," SAID SAMMIE.

"Oh," remarked Sammie, not very enthusiastically.

Just then Peter's mother called him to come in to lunch and Peter had to leave.

"Wait for me, Sammie," he said. "I'll be back right after lunch and show you the dungeon deep where you can stay, if you want to, until the tower is finished and it is time to rescue the Princess."

"Oh," said Sammie again, but he did not promise to wait. He did not want to rescue the Princess. "I've got enough," he thought to himself, "with my huckleberries and my turtle neck sweater. A princess would be one thing too many. Nope," said he emphatically, and he sat down and wrote this for Peter, and laid it at the foot of the high tower—

"Peter, I must go along.
A castle, a Princess, a tower high
Are not for poets such as I.
Good-bye, Peter, I cannot stay.
Good-bye, Peter, I'm on my way."

Up he got and took his huckleberries and his sweater and started off toward the Ashokan Reservoir. He tried to make up a rhyme about Ashokan. He tried and tried but one wouldn't come. It bothered him very much. Not a word could he think of to rhyme with Ashokan, and it took all the springiness

out of his heels, so he sat down beside the road to think. Suddenly he had it—

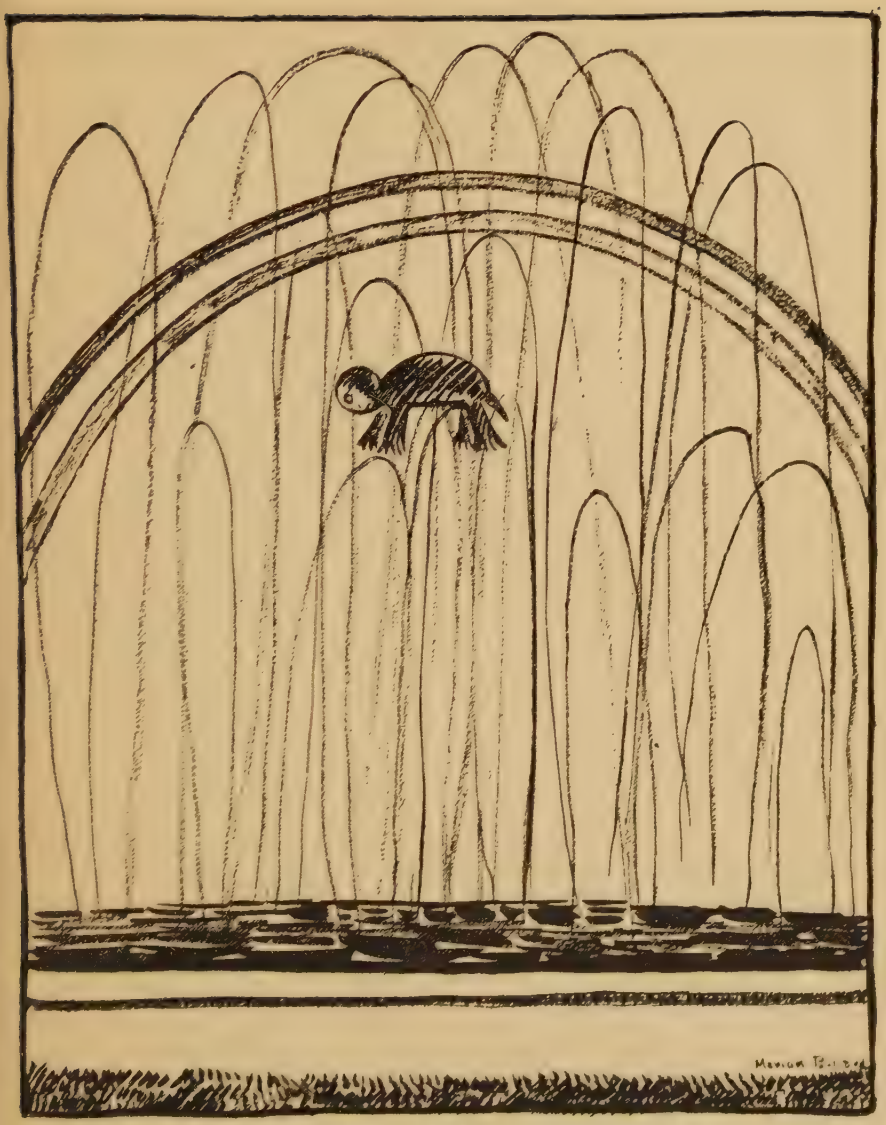
"If I should go to Ashokan,
Would I be rash? O can
I tell until I see the water flow
Whether I really oughter go?"

He felt a lot better after that was off his mind so he picked up his sweater and his huckleberries and started along, very gaily singing his new poem as he went.

"Great thing, poetry," remarked Sammie to himself, "keeps you moving right along."

Finally he came to the Reservoir and he went down below the Dam to see where they put the air in the water before it goes down to New York City. There was a huge pool with many fountains in the middle all shooting water high up into the air. A rainbow was always overhead. The water made such a pleasant sound and the spray looked so soft and of so many beautiful colours that Sammie felt he *must* get into the pool under all that lovely spray and wash the dust off him. He was standing at the edge of the pool with several other spectators and, when nobody was looking, in he slid.

And then—and THEN—up he shot into the air—and there he *stayed*. Nothing he could do in the way



"WHAT A PREDICAMENT," GROANED SAMMIE.

of kicking and struggling would bring him down. There he was—right on top of the shooting water, in the midst of the spray, with a rainbow over his head.

At first he felt perfectly exasperated.

"What a predicament!" he groaned, but in a minute or two he became used to floating up there and began to enjoy the sensation and all the colours of the rainbow, violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. Sammie smiled to himself and said "How I wish the Tent Caterpillar could see me now. Even if I had wings, I couldn't do much better than this. Now I am up here, I shall just enjoy the rainbow—besides, this shower bath would cost a lot at the Ritz. A penny saved is a penny earned."

But after awhile he remembered his huckleberries and his sweater lying on the ground beside the pool. "If I had known this was going to happen, I would have hidden them somewhere safely. Somebody may make off with them." He felt quite anxious and wondered what to do about it.

Just then came a good fresh breeze and it grew stronger and stronger until a regular high wind was blowing. And *then*—Sammie felt himself being wafted gently toward the far side of the pool, and *then*, very gently, he floated down to the edge.

He wiped the water out of his eyes and ran as fast as he could around to where he had left his sweater

and his huckleberries. There they were, perfectly safe.

He picked them up thankfully, and went over and sat down under one of the little pine trees while he ate a few berries.

"I never felt so clean in my life," he said to himself, contentedly. "That was a great experience but

HE PICKED UP HIS SWEATER AND HIS HUCKLEBERRIES THANKFULLY.

filled with considerable suspense. I had better make a poem about it before I start along. He thought a minute and then he smiled—"I've got it!—

The wind is tempered to the shorn lamb.
In this case, the lamb is me—Sam."

CHAPTER V

SAMMIE felt he ought to be hurrying along toward Kingston but first he decided to take a look up above the Dam at the Reservoir, so he climbed the steep hill up over the Dam and there on the other side was the great Ashokan Reservoir surrounded by mountains.

"My land!" exclaimed Sammie, "if the Atlantic Ocean is any bigger than that, crossing it will give me the fair pip.

"Sammie, my boy, if you have a notion
To swim across the Atlantic Ocean,
Give it up—it's far too wide.
You might not reach the other side.
With your berries and your sweater,
I think perhaps you hadn't better
Start."

"Poetry is a great consolation," he ruminated, saying this last one over with great satisfaction. Night was coming on so soon that he decided to find

a good comfortable spot on the shore of the Reservoir, go to bed early and make a fresh start in the morning, after a good night's sleep. He planned to go to Kingston and see the State House. "I must see the State House," he said thoughtfully to himself as he was preparing for bed, "who knows what may be in it? Who knows what may be in *any* State House for that matter?"

Then he caught sight of a basket lying on its side and it seemed a good shelter for the night. He crawled inside and covered his feet with his sweater and was fast asleep in no time. In fact he slept so soundly that he never stirred when the basket was picked up by the picnickers who had left it there. They put it into their automobile with the other picnic things and off they went. Sammie never knew it and, likewise, they never knew that they were carrying Sammie Turtle off to New York City.

Along about midnight he was awakened by a loud tooooooooooott! He jumped and peered about wondering where he was and what the noise could possibly be. Once more he heard the toot and then he realized it was a ferryboat whistle and he was on the boat.

"Gracious sakes, what can that be?
What in the world has happened to me!"

THERE WAS THE GREAT ASHOKAN RESERVOIR SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS.

said Sammie in alarm. And then he heard a voice from the front seat of the automobile saying to someone beside him—"if we don't get stopped on Broadway by the traffic cop, we can just make the one o'clock ferry to Staten Island."

When Sammie heard this he knew the time had come for him to hurry out of that automobile unless he wanted to go to Staten Island, which he very certainly did not. "Now I am in New York, I want to see a few things," he thought. "I don't want to go over to Staten Island, of all places." So, without a sound, he slipped out of the basket and out of the automobile—but, alas! he left his huckleberries behind him.

The boat went into the ferry slip and the automobile went off as fast as it could toward Staten Island, and there was Sammie—all alone in the great city. He found a secluded corner and stayed there quietly until the daylight came, then he started out. He started to cross the street but there seemed to be ten thousand motor trucks rushing this way and that, up and down and across.

"I'd rather get my stomach scratched by a briar every day in the week than be squashed once by one of those motor trucks," said Sammie. So he went up to a policeman.

"Officer," he said, "could you tell me where a Turtle could go for a good breakfast?"

The policeman considered a moment and then he replied, "I think, sir, the best ones are to be had at the Aquarium. Take the first street to the right, sir," and he pointed the way through a park after conducting Sammie safely across the street.

"Thank you, Officer," said Sammie, and went on his way, making a poem as usual—

"That was luck.
I might have been squashed
By a motor truck.
I must be wary
On my way
To the Aquari-
Um to-day."

By this time he had reached the Aquarium so he walked in and went up to speak to a woman who was seated behind a table selling post-cards. "I beg your pardon, madam," said Sammie in his politest manner, "can you tell me where I can get breakfast?"

The woman looked down at Sammie for a minute and then she called "Thomas!" A man in a blue uniform came over to the table and she said, "Thomas, take this Turtle up to Miss Fixem and ask her to give him some breakfast."

So Thomas took Sammie up stairs and opened a door. He found himself inside a very pleasant room.

THERE WAS SAMMIE, ALL ALONE IN THE CITY.

"What seems to be the matter, Sammie?" asked Miss Fixem.

"I seem to want some breakfast," replied Sammie.

Miss Fixem picked him up and put him into a glass tank filled with water and then she went away.

"*Now*—what do I suppose I am in for!" ejaculated Sammie.

"You are in for the Turtle Hospital," said someone beside him in the tank—and there was another Turtle.

"*But why?* I am an exceedingly well Turtle!" exclaimed Sammie.

"That may be," remarked the other Turtle, "but you look soft to me, and if you are soft they put you in the Hospital."

"Well, I'll be golsquizzled," remarked Sammie, "can't you tell the difference between a soft Turtle and one without his shell? I'll have to explain the whole thing to Miss Fixem. However, now I'm in here I certainly would like to know what ails *you?*"

"Just about everything is the matter with me," said the other Turtle gloomily. "I'm nearly blind and I'm very soft—too many ant eggs, too few meal worms, too little sunlight and not enough heat. Got the rickets in consequence. Look at me. So they brought me to the Hospital."

Sammie looked at him with great interest and

thought probably it was city living that had given him the rickets. "Are you better?" he asked.

"I certainly am," said the other Turtle enthusiastically. "This Turtle Hospital is a noble work. Here comes Miss Fixem now with your breakfast."

Sure enough, there she came, carrying a delicious looking meal worm. "Take this, Sammie," she said, "and now tell me all about it."

Which Sammie did, as soon as he had eaten the meal worm, for he was very, very hungry.

He told Miss Fixem all about how he had put his shell under the rock and come out to see the world and to write poems. "I am very much interested in your Turtle Hospital, Miss Fixem," said Sammie, "but if you will take a good look at me and feel of my muscle, you will see that I am a healthy Turtle and do not belong in the hospital."

Miss Fixem agreed that his muscle was very hard and that he seemed a very well Turtle. "We shall have to let you go, Sammie, but it has been a great pleasure to have you here for breakfast with us. Come any time you happen to be in the neighborhood of the Aquarium and remember this during your travels—a meal worm a day keeps the doctor away."

With that she led him down to the front door of the Aquarium and bade him good-bye and good luck.

Sammie looked this way and that.

"I *must* see the Woolworth Building and I *ought* to see the Metropolitan Museum and I *want* to walk up Fifth Avenue. I'll be on my way."

Just then the fire engines came tearing around the corner with gongs ringing like mad. Sammie looked after them and said to himself

"What's the use of singing songs
In a town that's full of gongs?"

Then he went very silently up Broadway.

SAMMIE WENT VERY SILENTLY UP BROADWAY.

CHAPTER VI

WHEN Sammie came to the Woolworth Building, he stopped and looked up. His head went back and back the higher he looked and Sammie was much pleased not to be having his shell pinching the back of his neck just like a stiff collar. Always in the old days when his shell was on him, it had bothered him to look so high.

"How very limited my life was in those shell days," he remarked to himself. "I must never again be so hampered by shells or other stiff things." He hugged his nice soft sweater up to him.

"Very much better
Than my shell
Is this sweater
I must tell."

And having made a new poem, he went into the elevator of the Woolworth Building. It immediately began to go up.

"I say, this is a topping lift," he heard a man say. Sammie was delighted with the words. "An elevator that lifts you to the top is certainly a topping lift," he thought. "Great thing, the English language—splendid for poetry and all sorts of things."

WHEN SAMMIE CAME TO THE WOOLWORTH BUILDING, HE LOOKED STRAIGHT UP.

When they reached the top, he stepped out and took another smaller lift that went still higher. Sammie began to think they would keep on going up forever and ever and he felt a little queer. "My word!" he exclaimed,

"This is so high
Perhaps it pokes
A hole in the sky."

However, when he walked out he found the sky just as far away as it had been when he was down on the sidewalk.

"It's a curious thing about the sky—
A Turtle can't seem to get very nigh
To it," said Sammie.

Everyone was leaning over the railing, looking down, but Sammie was too little to see over, in fact there he was down among all the feet and couldn't see much else.

"Now I'm up, I can't see down
Might as well be at the bottom of the town,"

grumbled Sammie to himself and began to feel discouraged, but not quite, for Sammie was never *entirely* discouraged. Suddenly he saw a basket sitting on the floor and he thought to himself, "baskets get lifted. Maybe if I am in it, I shall be lifted and *then* I can look out over the railing just as tall as anybody." So, in he clambered and waited. In a minute he heard a woman's voice say, "Pick up your basket, Tommy, and come along. We shall have to hurry or we shall miss the boat."

With that, Sammie felt himself lifted and then

EVERYONE WAS LEANING OVER THE RAILING LOOKING DOWN.

the basket stopped. It was resting on something. Sammie peeked hastily out over the edge and *there* . . . right below him was the *whole of New York City!* Tommy was taking another look and Sammie looked, too. He was utterly amazed for he had never seen anything from the top before except ants and rather small worms.

"I'll be golsquizzled!" he exclaimed. "They look exactly like Turtles! Feet sticking out from under their hats. Their hats might just as well be shells from up here! And the street cars look just like beetles! Very topping—*very* topping, I must say!"

Sammie was so excited that he was leaning way out over the edge of the basket and came very near falling out when Tommy grabbed the basket and ran to catch up with his mother. Sammie could do nothing but keep still and wonder where under the sun he was being taken. They joggled along until finally the basket was put down and then Sammie heard a familiar sound—the toot of a boat whistle.

"Am I on the wide Atlantic?
If I am, I *shall* be frantic"

said Sammie, and waited anxiously for other sounds.

"Look, Tommy, at the Palisades!" he heard the woman's voice exclaim—and then he knew where

he was. For Sammie always had learned his geography lesson. He knew he was on the Hudson River.

"I bet I am going right back to where I came from!" he ejaculated, "right back up to the Catskill Mountains." And sure enough he was. When the boat reached Kingston Point, Sammie slipped out of Tommy's basket and he never knew that he had carried Sammie Turtle almost home again from the great city.

Sammie walked down the gang plank and looked around for Jimmy the bus driver. There he was, waiting for passengers to the Village.

"Got room for me, Jimmy?" asked Sammie.

"Always room for one more Turtle, Sammie," said Jimmy the bus driver, "hop in."

So in climbed Sammie and off went the bus toward home. When they reached the village, Sammie climbed down from the bus and started up the road toward the field and the brook and the Pool.

When he came to the barnyard, he waved to the Speckled Hen. "How is your Aunt?" he called. When he came to the huckleberry patch, he waved to the Lop Eared Rabbit. "How's the Woodchuck?" he shouted, but he never inquired for the Red Squirrel.

The Woodchuck came out of his hole and he and the Lop Eared Rabbit waved to Sammie and called "glad to see you back—come in and tell us the news!"

But Sammie would not stop. He called back to them,

"I want to go up and look for my shell.
I'll see you later. I've lots to tell."

CHAPTER VII

SAMMIE walked along the path through the field to the brook and up to the shelving rock under which he had hidden his shell. Nothing much was changed, but Sammie felt very, very different and much wiser than when he had started out, on that very path, to see the world.

When he looked under the rock—there was his shell.

"Well, well, well!
My good old shell!"

exclaimed Sammie, feeling greatly pleased to see it again after all this time. He started to get inside it. Then down he sat on the ground with surprise—for out stuck another Turtle's head and said, "see here, what are you trying to do? This shell is occupied. Look where you are going!" Very cross the voice was, too.

"Calm yourself," replied Sammie, "I guess I can

"WELL, WELL, WELL, MY GOOD OLD SHELL," SAID SAMMIE.

see it is occupied now you've stuck your head out. But it used to be *my* shell. *Naturally* I started to get into it. No need to act like a Snapping Turtle, is there?"

"*Naturally* I don't want you crowding in here with me," answered the other Turtle.

"*Naturally,* I don't want to. I want you to get out of my shell," rejoined Sammie.

"Findings is keepings," said the other Turtle. "This shell fits me—and where shall I go to find another?"

Being an investigating sort of Turtle, Sammie began to feel interested instead of cross, so he asked, "where's your own shell, anyway?"

"Cracked," replied the other Turtle. "I was over at Rhoda Chase's Pool and some workmen dropped a stone upon me unbeknownst to Rhoda. They broke my shell right through the middle. I had to have another and when I found this one unoccupied, I got into it."

"Do you like it?" asked Sammie with interest.

"Very much," said the other Turtle.

"I didn't," Sammie told him. "It hampered me, so I got out of it and went to see the world, but now I am home again I want it."

"But, Sammie," begged the other Turtle, who

was a Mild Turtle, not at all like our adventuring Sammie, "let me keep your shell. You can get along without it now. Don't make a fuss."

"The world is full of briars and things," explained Sammie. "I thought I would at least take my under shell along with me on my next trip. Taking it all in all, a shell is handy in an emergency even if it is a bother most of the time."

The Mild Turtle had been looking very hard at Sammie all this time, and now he said, "I have a sort of an idea—that is, if you will play fair."

When he said *that,* it made Sammie mad, for if ever there was an honorable Turtle it was Sammie. He started to punch the Mild Turtle in the eye—and he would actually have hit him if the other Turtle hadn't pulled his head in quickly. Sammie was sorry he had been so quick-tempered, so he said, "I won't punch you in the eye."

The Mild Turtle poked his head out very cautiously and said, "I'm sorry, Sammie. I know you wouldn't cheat, but, someway, having a shell makes a Turtle suspicious. You know how it is. I'm sorry."

"That's all right," said Sammie generously, "I *do* know how it is. It is this *preparedness*. If you expect to be hit, I guess you will be. Stick your head out and let's talk this over. What's your idea?"

"My idea," stated the Mild Turtle, "is this—let's run a race for this shell. We can start from the wild cherry tree and the one that gets here first gets the shell."

"Not a bad idea. All right," agreed Sammie.

So the Mild Turtle came out of Sammie's shell and they went over to the wild cherry tree. A Beetle counted three for them.

"ONE—TWO—THREE—GO!" SHOUTED THE BLACK BEETLE.

"One, two, three—Go!" shouted the Beetle. And they were off.

From the very start, Sammie was ahead and he reached the shell long before the Mild Turtle got there, for his travels had made him swift. He turned to back into his shell—but he couldn't get in. He stuck.

When the Mild Turtle arrived all out of breath, there was Sammie part of the way into his shell and unable to go any further.

"Stuck, aren't you?" asked the Mild Turtle.

Sammie looked at him sternly. "I bet you *knew* this was what would happen."

"STUCK, AREN'T YOU?" ASKED THE MILD TURTLE.

"Well," answered the Mild Turtle, "what do you expect? You can't go out into the world and do so many things and not get bigger, can you? If you had wanted a shell, you ought to have stayed in it."

Sammie scratched his head and remarked ruefully,

"I fear you're right,
My shell's too tight."

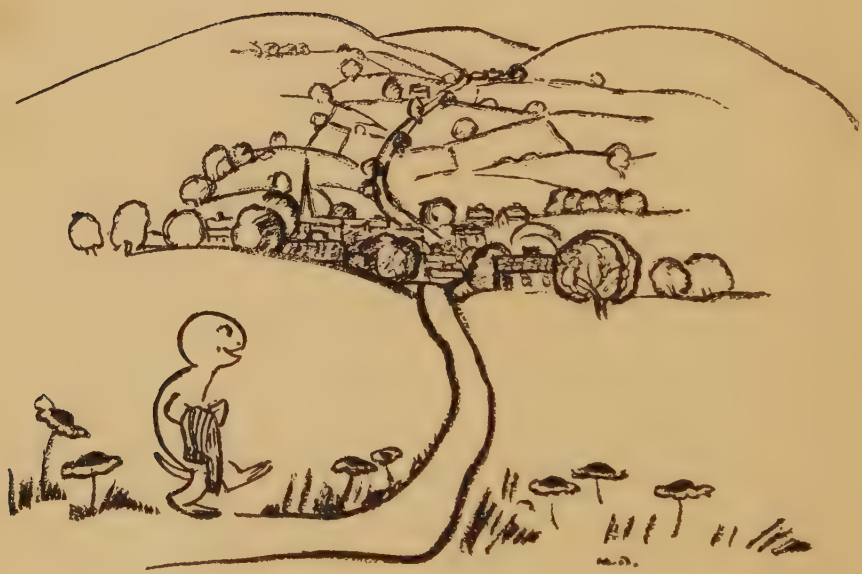
The Mild Turtle tried to look sympathetic but looked pleased instead.

Then Sammie nodded his head. "This settles it. I guess you had better stay right in that shell and help with the real estate business. A Turtle *has* to have a shell for that. And I shall just keep moving right along. It's more fun, anyway." He shook hands with the Mild Turtle and wished him success. Picking up his sweater, he waved a good-bye and was off again out into the great world.

Across the field he went, along the little, flowery path, springiness in his heels and poems in his head, singing as he strode happily along—

"I shall keep a-moving
A-moving right along;
Keep right on a-knowing
Keep right on a-growing
'Til I'm old and aching
And stiffened in the knees.
Then I guess I very well
Can find myself a larger shell
To fit into with ease.
While I'm young and spry and strong

I'll keep moving right along,
And sing myself a happy song—
Tira loola tira lay
Sammie Turtle's on his way."



"TIRA LOOLA TIRA LAY, SAMMIE TURTLE'S ON HIS WAY."

THE END

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